Government of Nova Scotia
Public Service Commission

Accountability Report
2002/2003 Fiscal Year

NOVA SCOTIA

Public Service Commission

106-05421/

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Accountability Statement

The Accountability Report of the Public Service Commission for the year ended March 31, 2003, is prepared pursuant to the Provincial Finance Act and government policies and guidelines. These authorities require the reporting of outcomes against the Public Service Commission's business plan information for the fiscal year 2002/2003. The reporting of the Public Service Commission's outcomes necessarily includes estimates, judgements and opinions by the Public Service Commission's management.

We acknowledge that this accountability report is the responsibility of the Public Service Commission's senior management. The report is, to the extent possible, a complete and accurate representation of outcomes relative to the goals and priorities set out in the Public Service Commission's business plan for the year.

Minister: _____
Honourable Carolyn Bolivar-Getson

Commissioner: _____
Vicki Harnish

Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the *2002-2003 Accountability Report* for the Nova Scotia Public Service Commission.

The majority of this report deals with the performance of the PSC over the past year against the goals that we set for ourselves in the previous year's business plan. The Provincial Government is committed to transparent and accountable governance which is why we report back to the people of Nova Scotia on our level of achievement each year.

The PSC provides leadership, strategic direction and expertise in human-resource management to support development of a strong public service. We are responsible for developing and implementing human-resource policy, programs and services; for fair hiring and treatment of staff; and we act on the Government's behalf in collective bargaining.

Employees of the PSC are proud of their contribution to developing a robust public service because they understand the role this plays in promoting a healthy, prosperous, and self-sufficient Nova Scotia. The job market is a competitive one and we must be able to attract -- and keep -- highly qualified employees. The work done by our PSC staff has a direct impact on the people we are able to hire to fill vastly diverse and important jobs – fire fighters to social workers to administrators.

The Public Services Commission's *2002-2003 Accountability Report* not only provides an overview of last year's work, but also sets the stage for our current year's business plan. I would like to thank PSC staff, HR directors, and all government managers for their contribution to a vital public service in Nova Scotia.

Carolyn Bolivar-Getson
Minister of the Public Service Commission

Message from the Commissioner

The Government of Nova Scotia is committed to open and accountable government. Because of this, we report back regularly to the House of Assembly and the public on the results we've achieved against our business plans. We do this through our annual *Accountability Report*. The report is a straightforward summary of progress made on major goals and objectives for the year.

This year's report highlights our activities and identifies our progress toward meeting the Government's goal of having a professional and effective public service capable of delivering quality programs and services to Nova Scotians.

Last year's business plan set out strategic direction to help make the Government of Nova Scotia an employer of choice. This is an important goal as we face issues such as an aging workforce, a highly competitive job market, and changing employee expectations of work-life balance, among other things.

I believe that we have made good progress against this goal and I look forward to working with PSC senior staff, HR directors and staff, and line managers across government to go even further in addressing the changing needs of our workforce.

Vicki Harnish
Public Service Commissioner

Introduction

Purpose of the Report

The Government of Nova Scotia is committed to the principal of open and accountable government. Accountability is enhanced by regular reporting to the House of Assembly and the public on results relative to the goals and priorities outlined in the Business Plan at the beginning of each fiscal year. Annual business plans and accountability reports are essential tools for government and agencies to assess organizational performance. The report is intended to be a straightforward account of progress made on major goals and objectives for the year.

The Business Plan and Accountability Report 2002/2003

The Public Service Commission Accountability Report for the fiscal year 2002/2003 summarizes the activities, accomplishments and performance measures for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2003. Information contained specifically reflects on the 2002/2003 Business Plan and as such, both documents should be read together.

Structure and Organization of the Report

The report begins with an overview of the Public Service Commission's business, including mission, core business functions and organizational structure. The majority of the report focuses on the goals, accomplishments and performance of the Public Service Commission for the fiscal year 2002/2003. Financial results are presented and an explanation provided of any significant variances between the budget net expenditures reported in the Business Plan and actual results. The report also includes supplemental information (appendices) to provide the reader with additional background information.

Mission of the Nova Scotia Public Service Commission

The Public Service Commission provides leadership, strategic direction, and expertise in human resource management to support the development of a strong public service.

- To act as government's agent for collective bargaining
- To be responsible for the development and implementation of high-quality human resource policy, programs, and services
- To ensure, through audit and evaluation, the quality and value of human resource management practices
- To ensure a fair and effective hiring process

Core Business Functions

Labour Relations - Manage the employment relationships for Government with its direct employees, including collective bargaining, and develop a comprehensive and integrated approach to labour relations in the broader public sector.

Human Resource Management Policy - Provide strategic guidance to Government on human resource management issues through policies which are aimed at innovative methods for developing the public service to meet changing needs.

Human Resource Programs and Services - Develop programs and services to support the development of an effective and dynamic public service.

Audit and Evaluation - Ensure accountability for human resources policy/program effectiveness and assess Government progress in achieving human resource goals.

Organization Structure

Restructuring

The Public Service Commission has recently been restructured to help Government meet human resource challenges, support the PSC's legislative mandate, and better meet the needs of Government departments and agencies. The Public Service Commission needed to shift its focus away from operational activities toward strategic leadership for HR within government. To achieve this a new organizational structure (Appendix A) and updated, clear processes were required.

The Public Service Commission now consists of three primary divisions reporting to the Commissioner: Planning and Coordination, Strategic Human Resource Management, and Employee Relations. Evaluation and Audit continues to be independent of the primary divisions to ensure objectivity with the Director of Audit reporting directly to the Commissioner.

Expanded Role

- The current fiscal pressures have provided the impetus to assume an expanded role in collective bargaining thereby improving Government accountability.
- As the Public Service Commission shifts from a transactional to a strategic organization, moving operational transactions to line departments, audit and evaluation become more important. The audit and evaluation function is key to ensuring accountability.

Public Service Commission Progress and Accomplishments

This section outlines the strategic goals and priorities as outlined in the Public Service Commission's 2002/2003 Business Plan. Accomplishments and progress achieved during the year for each priority are described in this section. Information on pertinent human resource, information technology and finance functions of the Commission are also included in this section. Any significant accomplishments not anticipated in the original business plan but achieved in this fiscal year have also been identified.

Strategic Goals

Six strategic goals were identified in the 2002/2003 Business Plan as key to the Public Service Commission's mission.

1. Recruit and retain professional and effective public servants.

2. Compensate, reward and recognize public servants for their contribution to government's goals and priorities.

3. Support learning opportunities for employees by offering and encouraging training opportunities.

4. Ensure effectiveness and compliance of corporate human resource policies and programs through audit and evaluation.

5. Support government accountability by coordinating collective bargaining and extending human resource policies to include the broader public service.

6. Provide a safe work environment and support the well being of employees.

The Public Service Commission integrates the principles of Diversity Management within each of the above goals.

The Public Service Commission goals are consistent with, and support, government department human resource goals and priorities as well as the overall goals and priorities of government, including:

- responsible, accountable government
- continuous learning
- fiscal stability
- good internal management
- a professional public service.

Priorities

Priority initiatives were identified in the business plan for the fiscal year 2002/2003. These priorities were considered necessary to advance the strategic goals. Progress on these priorities are summarized below:

Core Business Area #1 - Labour Relations

Priority 1: **Initiate a comprehensive and integrated strategy for labour relations in the broader public service by:**

- *Identifying the existing capacity and structures.*
- *Determining how they can be most effectively utilized and organized.*

The Public Service Commission serves a coordinating role in conjunction with other government departments and public sector employers and provides advice to government on public sector bargaining funded by government. This is an ongoing responsibility.

As a result of the review of the Public Service Commission, the labour relations function was assigned to a newly established position of Executive Director Employee Relations.

Priority 2: **Increase the labour relations ability within government by:**

- *Upgrading or refreshing skills within the HR community through the provision of a Labour Relations Training Program.*

A labour relations training needs assessment for both the HR community and line managers, was initiated and completed in 2002. The results of the needs assessment were used as the basis for the development of the Labour Relations training for line managers delivered in the fiscal year 2002/2003 as well as for the development of Labour Relations training for the HR community which will commence in the fiscal year 2003/2004.

- *Developing a Labour Relations Training Program for line managers.*

A labour relations training program was developed and delivered to line managers (37 in total) as part of the following leadership development programs:

- Middle Management Group #32 - Jan 14/03 (20 participants)
- Middle Management Group #33 - Jan 17/03 (17 participants)

The Public Service Commission will be incorporating this training in all future middle management leadership development programs as well as a new Manager's Orientation Training Program scheduled for fall 2003.

Core Business Area #2 - Human Resource Management Policy

Priority 3: "Employer of Choice" Policies

- *Promote existing "Employer of Choice" policies and develop new policies in support of Public Service Commission "Employer of Choice" goals and priorities.*

  - Promote existing "Employer of Choice" policies

    There are a number of existing "Employer of Choice" policies including performance management and training and development that were promoted in 2002/2003. HR professionals and managers were trained on enhancements to the performance management system for MCP employees (see priority 6). Similarly, the importance of training and development continues to be promoted to Deputy Ministers, managers, and employees.

  - Develop new policies

    New policies have been developed to help make government an "Employer of Choice" including MCP Pay for Performance (effective April 1, 2002), Pay for Performance for Senior Officials (effective July 18, 2002) and the Secondment Policy (effective January 23, 2003).

    The Public Service Commission, working in partnership with government's HR community, has also started work on a Corporate HR Strategy that sets the strategic directions for government.

Core Business Area #3 - Human Resource Programs and Services

Priority 4: Management Compensation Project.

- *The Management Compensation Project includes an examination of both the job evaluation (classification) and pay component of the Management Compensation system. This is an ongoing priority, in support of recruiting and retaining resources necessary for a productive, sustainable workforce.*

  Progress achieved in the fiscal year 2002/2003:

Job descriptions were prepared and approved by managers and incumbents for the 83 management jobs that form benchmarks for the new job evaluation system.

A twelve member Quality Assurance Panel representing a diverse cross section of upper middle and senior level managers were trained in government's new approach to job evaluation and completed draft evaluations on all 83 benchmarks.

The HR community received trainir on the new method of evaluating civil service management jobs.

Priority 5: Coordinate the Bargaining Unit Classification Project

- *The Bargaining Unit Classification Project, is a review of all civil service bargaining unit positions, to develop a new job classification system. The project commenced in Summer 2001 and is an ongoing priority.*

Progress achieved in the fiscal year 2002/2003:

1,500 job fact sheets evaluated by the Joint Union/Management Job Evaluation Committee (April 1, 2002 - January 9, 2003)

Implementation Committee established and meetings commenced (August, 2002).

A grand total of approximately 2,600 fact sheets were received by January 1, 2003 and were evaluated by March 31, 2003.
Re-evaluation of the first 250 fact sheets received in order to ensure consistency with subsequent evaluations (January 10, 2003 - February 25, 2003)

Joint Steering Committee agreed upon and recommended a new classification structure consisting of 16 levels (January 31, 2003)

A formal review of all results commenced by the Joint Union/Management Job Evaluation Committee (February 26, 2003)

Informal discussions initiated with the NSGEU by the Implementation Committee regarding data release and implementation issues (on going).

Priority 6: Performance Management - Phase 1

- *Ensure all MCP (management group) managers are trained in setting targets and assessing performance for the MCP group.*

  To assist managers in performance assessment, two key initiatives were undertaken in 2002/2003: enhancements to the system to help managers set goals and assess performance, and training on the enhancements.

  Enhancements to the system included:
  - updated and reformatted performance management handbook
  - redesigned supporting forms and assessments tools
  - completely redeveloped training materials

  A half day information/training module for MCPs was developed and provided by the Public Service Commission to 270 managers and HR professionals.

- *Update the core leadership competency assessment instrument for use in the Performance Management System.*

  To ensure leadership competencies remain relevant and are indicative of the leadership behaviour that we need in all managers, it was recommended that a review be conducted of the existing leadership competencies. A project charter for the "Competency Rationalization Project 2002" was created. A draft competency dictionary and assessment questionnaire has been designed. The approval and vetting of the competencies will proceed this fiscal year.

Priority 7 : Further develop and build upon existing succession management programs while considering new programs possibilities and strategies.

- *Implement government-wide succession management practices to prepare individuals for future vacancies in government.*

  Succession management programs offered government wide include the Executive Career Assignment Program (ECAP), the Career Assignment Program (CAP), Leadership Development Programs, and four youth and diversity employment programs.

- *Further develop the Executive Career Assignments Program (ECAP), a provincial public service management development program designed to equip participants with the necessary competencies and experience to assume higher level positions as well as the ongoing leadership development programs will be further promoted and developed.*

  Executive Career Assignment Program (ECAP)

ECAP was launched as a pilot program aimed at enhancing the capacity of leaders. This program provides a combination of learning and development tools to enhance leadership competencies and expand experience in core government functions. A key component of the program is job assignments, typically lasting 12 - 24 months.

The ECAP Program will be replaced by the Career Assignment Program (CAP) in future years.

Career Assignment Program (CAP)

CAP is a joint program of the Provincial Government and the Federal Government to develop leaders for the future. There were three available seats in the program and they were filled based on a rigorous assessment and eligibility process.

ECAP and CAP were developed and implemented in 2002. Both programs are intended to enhance our leadership pool in the public service and assist with succession management. Further career assignments/developmental assignment programs will be designed to meet the needs of managers.

Extended Leadership Development and Skills Training

Frontline manager, middle manager, and individual contributor leadership development programs were held throughout the 2002/2003 fiscal year. The Public Service Commission provided this intensive development, approximately 15 days training, to 347 employees. Also, soft skills and computer application training programs are offered centrally through the Public Service Commission. In the 2002/2003 fiscal year, 1,695 employees attended this training.

Youth and Diversity Employment Programs

Career Starts Civil Service Internship Program

The Career Starts Internship Program gives recent post-secondary graduates an opportunity to work in the Nova Scotia Civil Service.

There were 16 post-secondary internships (49 weeks in duration) in the fiscal year 2002/2003. In addition to administering the program, evaluation work was conducted including on going evaluation of the 2002/2003 program, follow up interviews with interns from the 2001/2002 program and a comprehensive program evaluation of the 2000/2001 program was completed.

Co-op Education Program

The Co-operative Education Program is designed to assist Nova Scotia government departments, agencies, and commissions to provide career-related opportunities for students. There were a total of 45 student work term placements in 2002/2003.

Co-operative Education Program - 2002/2003		
work term	duration	# of students
summer	May 1 - Aug. 31, 2002	9
fall	Sept. 1 - Dec. 31, 2002	16
winter	Jan. 2 - April 30, 2003	20

Summer Employment Mentorship Program for Female Students

The Mentorship Program offers female students the opportunity to gain valuable work experience for the future in non-traditional or under-represented occupations. In the fiscal year 2002/2003 there were 12 participants.

Summer Employment Diversity Program

The Summer Employment Diversity Program provides members of designated groups with the opportunity for summer employment. In the fiscal year 2002/2003 there were 12 participants.

- *Establish clear structures across government departments to strategically address anticipated staff and skill shortages.*

The succession management process was developed in 1999. The process will be further developed including work on implementation plans in the 2003/2004 fiscal year.

Priority 8 : Implement Streamlined Staffing.

- *A streamlined system designed with line departments may reduce the existing average time to fill a position from 75 days to close to 20.*

  A streamlined staffing process was implemented whereby the receipt of applications, applicant evaluation, short listing and selection are to be completed by line departments. By the end of March 2003, Community Services, Health and the Finance CSU were participants in streamlined staffing. Pilot departments have reported a 14 day decrease in the number of days to fill a position.

- *The Public Service Commission will continue to support the staffing function by providing training, posting vacancies and final authority.*

  The Public Service Commission continued to maintain the Employment Bulletin which posts vacancies for all (non casual) civil servants and corrections positions. The process for posting vacancies was streamlined in 2001/2002 thereby enabling departments to forward their postings directly to the Government Employment Opportunities System (GEOS).

  The PSC conducted one recruitment/selection training session with 20 participants on March 24, 2003 as part of the Front Line Leadership Development Program.

Priority 9 : Further support and promote Wellness in the Nova Scotia Public Service

- *Lead corporate Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) initiatives, work with and support departments and employees in meeting their responsibilities for health and safety.*

  The Public Service Commission continued to lead corporate Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) initiatives, to support departments and employees in meeting their responsibilities for health and safety by undertaking the following:

  In 2002/2003, the PSC initiated a legal and operational review of the PSC's corporate OH&S obligations, OHS compliance and resourcing practices across government and related due diligence requirements. Accountability for OH&S, process management systems, access to qualified OH&S support staff and the future role of the PSC were examined.

  As a result of this review, the Public Service Commission will serve in a leadership role as opposed to directly servicing on-going OHS needs in line

departments. The PSC will provide a centre of support to line OHS professionals. Support roles envisioned include coordination, information and referral services and problem solving - stepping in where action is required to advance an initiative that no individual line department owns. Resumption of the corporate OH&S audit is seen as key.

The Public Service Commission also worked with the HR Forum to identify the following OH&S priority initiatives:

- Raise the profile of OH&S. A new OH&S newsletter was introduced in June 2002.

- Conduct an OH&S survey within government. A survey was conducted in August 2002.

- *Further promote Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and evaluate the effectiveness of the program.*

Promotion of Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

- Four EAP Supervisor Training Sessions were provided through Human Resource Development Training with 60 managers attending. All were advised of EAP Awareness packages available in line HR departments to be used in staff meetings and new staff orientation.
- With the help of Communications Nova Scotia, EAP awareness materials were produced and distributed across government.
- The EAP website was enhanced to provide easy employee access to information about the EAP. A client feedback form is now on the website and users of EAP are encouraged to complete and submit comments.

Evaluation measures of Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Parameters were created in the EAP database to determine the working status of employees at time of contact to EAP and the working status of employees while receiving assistance through EAP. These parameters were applied to all cases opened and closed in 2002-2003. This information will assist the Public Service Commission to determine if further promotion of EAP should be done with employees on Short Term Illness (STI) or Long Term Disability (LTD). As well, the present data indicates that a majority of EAP clients did not go on to STI or LTD, thus reinforcing the preventative aspect of the EAP.

Priority 10 : Implement HR SAP (Project eMerge)

- *An information management system currently being used by other governments which will provide easy and instant access to human resource data within the Government of Nova Scotia.*

  The Planning and Scoping Phase of the Project eMerge was undertaken during 2002/2003, which included 12 workshops with key stakeholders to identify the project's high-level scope and priorities. The deliverable resulting from this work was the Project Charter, which was approved by the Business and Technology Advisory Committee (BTAC) in January, 2003. The Project Preparation phase followed, which included the establishment of the project's office, recruitment of more than 30 team members, and the development and delivery of a training plan for the team.

Core Business Area #4 - Evaluation and Audit

Priority 11 : Establish communication and liaison relationships

- *communication lines, and liaison relationships will need to be built between the management of this function and its clients:*
  - *line departments' human resources functions*
  - *public service entities (as defined in the definition)*
  - *senior management with the Public Service Commission*
  - *Deputy Ministers' Advisory Committee*
  - *Corporate Internal Audit Function at the Department of Finance*
  - *Office of the Auditor General*

  In 2002/2003, Evaluation and Audit developed relationships with management and various HR clients through the following activities:

  - Attended HR Forum meetings to update the line HR departments on the progress of this function as well as met individually with each HR Director to solicit information for the Evaluation and Audit planning process;
  - Conducted lunch and learn sessions to update Public Service Commission staff on the progress and direction of this function.
  - Met individually with members of senior management to discuss any relevant issues from senior management's perspective, as well as attended the senior management meetings as a team member.
  - Liaised with Corporate Internal Audit and the Office of the Auditor General as a means to avoid duplicating audit work, and to share information for each planning process. In particular:
    - Joined forces with Corporate Internal Audit on the Travel Allowance Review project and established terms of reference for a future joint audit of travel expenditures.
    - Consulted with the Office of the Audit General on audit processes.

Additional Significant Accomplishments

This section describes other significant accomplishments not identified as priorities in the business plan 2002/2003.

1. The Public Service Commission is undertaking the implementation of a Corporate Employee Wellness Program. Research initiatives are underway. This research includes reviewing what is taking place in other provinces and other large organizations in Canada and the US. The Public Service Commission is working at building relationships with other major employers and unions within the province and recognizes this as a first step in improving the health of employees.

2. The development of a new Manager's Orientation Program was initiated. This program is intended for both current and new managers. The program will include an overview of Government structure and processes, acts, manuals, legislation, financial management, human resource management, OH&S, labour relations and wellness. This program is a complement to the Leadership Development programs offered. The intent is for all managers to attend the orientation to ensure they have what they need to fulfill their management responsibilities.

3. The Public Service Commission continues to work to make meaningful change in the area of diversity management through on going education with a focus on targeting key leadership groups such as deputy ministers and line managers. We also provide entry programs to designated under represented groups. In 2002/2003, there were 234 participants in the Diversity Equity Education Program, a one day mandatory training program.

Financial Results

The Public Service Commission's primary expense is its staff who are needed to provide expertise in the delivery of the department's core business functions. The department engages in an on-going review of its operations to identify opportunities for improved efficiencies and cost savings.

Actual Versus Budgeted Expenditures

In 2002-2003, the Public Service Commission had an approved budget allocation of $4,226,000. Actual net 2002-2003 expenditures totaled $3,949,557 (93.4% spent). Savings were realized in general operating expenses and because of staff vacancies maintained pending the reorganization of the department. The following table provides a breakdown of authority versus actual 2002-2003 PSC expenditures.

Public Service Commission ($ thousands)			
Division	**Authority**	**Actual**	**Variance**
Office of the Commissioner	384.9	375.9	-9
Labour Relations	580.1	417.2	-162.9
Human Resource Management Policy	370	330.2	-39.8
Human Resource Audit & Evaluation	157.3	148.5	-8.8
Human Resource Program & Services	2733.7	2677.8	-55.9
Public Service Commission Total	$4,226.0	$3,949.6	-276.4
Funded staff (FTEs)	65.0	65.7	0.7

Public Service Commission Performance Reporting

Introduction

The Public Service Commission, as the corporate entity for human resources for Government, is responsible for corporate policies, programs and services to assist all Government departments in meeting their respective HR needs and goals. The Public Service Commission's measures focus on tracking and reporting on government-wide HR results. A number of new measures will be introduced once systems have been put in place to monitor and track the effect of corporate policy in a consistent manner. The Public Service Commission will begin the process of implementing HR SAP, a web-based information management tool in 2003/2004. This corporate HR information system will be used across Government for planning and decision making and is expected to provide a source of reliable data for future performance measures.

Performance Measures 2002/2003

Core Business Area 1: Labour Relations

Outcome 1: Improved Collective Agreement Administration

MEASURE 1: Number of labour relations training sessions to HR community and line managers.

What does this Measure Tell Us?

HR professionals and managers trained in LR will deliver more consistent labour relations practices across Government.

Where are we now?

Guidance and support on labour relations issues is provided by the Public Service Commission when required. A labour relations training needs assessment for both the HR community and line managers was initiated and completed in 2002. The results were used to develop and deliver training to line managers through the leadership development program (37 managers in total). Please note: at present the percentage of managers who have received training has not yet been determined.

Training for the HR community was also developed based on the results of the needs assessment and will be delivered in 2003/2004.

Where do We Want to Go/Be in the Future?

Our target is to ensure that all HR professionals and managers who would benefit from LR training sessions, receive this training. Bargaining unit supervisors will also need this training. The Public Service Commission will be working with department CSUs and using the human resource management information system to identify managers and supervisors that require training.

Core Business Area 2: **Human Resource Management Policy**

Outcome 1: Provide employees and managers with a high quality work environment.

MEASURE 1: Absenteeism rate.

What does this Measure Tell Us?

The average number of days lost per employee per year due to general illness, medical appointments and short-term illness. This is an indicator of overall employee health.

Where are We Now?

The absenteeism rate was 10.7 in 1996/97, 9.78 days per employee (civil servant) per year in 2000/2001. The rate in 2002/2003 is 9.35. (According to Statistics Canada, the national rate of absenteeism in 2001 for an average full-time employee, was 8.5 days.)

Where do We Want to Go/Be in the Future?

Our target is to reduce the absenteeism rate from 9.78 to 8.75 days. We will work towards this with the continued use of the Attendance Management Policy including guidance, support and monitoring.

MEASURE 2: Incidences of work-related stress.

What does this Measure Tell Us?

The measure includes the number of employees experiencing the effects of: workplace allegations, career issues, workplace conflict, unhealthy work environment (i.e. workload, lack of respect, etc.), group bereavement, workplace harassment, performance issues, termination, workplace adjustment.

Where are We Now?

The 2002/ 2003 rate of work-related stress was 18.2% of the total 716 EAP cases. The rate has seen a slight decrease since 2000/2001 (18.9% of the 735 EAP cases).

Base Year data	(2000/2001):	18.9%
	(2002/2003):	18.2%
Target	(2004/2005):	15.0%

Where do We Want to Go/Be in the Future?

Our goal is to continue to monitor the incidence of work-related stress. We recognize that it is important to look behind the numbers. For example, an increase in EAP cases may in fact be a positive outcome as more employees seek assistance rather than miss work due to an unaddressed work-related problem. A rate of 15% is our target for 2004/2005.

MEASURE 3: Voluntary Staff Turnover Rates.

What does this Measure Tell Us?

This measure indicates the number of employees who are leaving the Government of Nova Scotia on a voluntary basis.

Where are We Now?

Government currently has a 3.32% voluntary turnover rate.

Where do We Want to Go/Be in the Future?

Our target is to continue to track staff turnover rates and trends and incorporate into decision-making. It is important to look behind the numbers, who is leaving and why.

Core Business Area 3: Human Resource Programs and Services

Outcome 1: Attract and retain the most suitable individuals.

MEASURE 1: Percentage of employees and managers receiving performance assessments.

What does this Measure Tell us?

Performance management is a strategic leadership tool for organizational effectiveness. It helps ensure that efforts of the Nova Scotia Civil Service are focused on the priorities and strategies outlined in the Government and

Department Business Plans. Performance management is also a framework for developing competent leadership for the future.

Where are We Now?

100% of present and eligible management (MCP) employees received performance assessments. This can be attributed to promotion of the MCP employee performance management system including training on enhancements to the system.

2002/2003 MCP Performance Ratings:	1,016
Employees unable to be rated:	120*
Other non-rated employees:	107**
Total number of MCP employees:	1,243

*120 employees were not rated for the following reasons: transferred during the year, on leave for full or part, returning from leave, new MCP employees, not within their contract/OIC to receive etc.

**A further 107 employees were on leave during the said period or their increment due date is later than 2003/04/01.

Where do We Want to Go/Be in the Future?

Our target is to ensure all Management Compensation Pay Plan (MCP) employees and managers receive annual performance assessments again in 2003/2004 and 2004/2005. The Public Service Commission also intends to promote performance appraisals for bargaining unit employees and will be introducing measurement of same. Bargaining unit performance management tools and manual for the system have been developed and provided to departments for HR sections to provide to their managers.

MEASURE 2: The number of employees and managers attending Public Service Commission training programs.

What Does the Measure Tell Us?

Life-long learning and continuous improvement are important to employee development. Programs offered by the Public Service Commission are designed to support organizational and individual development needs which, in turn, help civil servants meet the challenge of delivering quality public services to Nova Scotians.

Where are We Now?

All courses offered reflect the feedback and suggestions of employees across Government and focus on the skills we believe are most important for employees to deliver quality public service.

In 2002/2003 over 1,695 employees took one or more courses provided by the Public Service Commission. A calendar of corporate training and development courses is provided to employees. This calendar includes courses in the following areas of study: diversity management, leadership skill development, personal development, records management, workplace skill development and computers.

In 2002/2003, 347 Government employees took part in extended leadership programs; this is an increase of 147 from the previous fiscal year.

Where do We Want to Go/Be in the Future?

We want to continue to provide courses and programs designed to provide civil servants with the skills needed to succeed in providing excellence in service delivery to Nova Scotians. This means maintaining or increasing the proportion of managers and employees who have received training and development in a cost efficient and effective manner.

MEASURE 3: Voluntary Staff Turnover Rate.

See Core Business Area 2, Outcome 1, Measure 3.

MEASURE 4: The number of Career Starts interns that continue who work for government upon completion of their internship.

What does this Measure Tell Us?

In the Spring of 1998, the Government of Nova Scotia established a new civil service internship program called 'Career Starts', which provides recent post-secondary graduates with an opportunity to develop their job skills, gain career-related experience, and work in the Nova Scotia Civil Service. This measure would tell us how many interns we are able to retain after their internship. An evaluation was conducted in 2002/2003 of the 2001/2002 program, to assess if the program is meeting its objectives in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Where are We Now?

The number of internship positions (49 weeks in duration) has been doubled from 8 to 16 since the program was introduced in 1998. In 2000/2001, 5 of the 16 interns continued to work for government after finishing the Career Starts Program. In 2002/2003, 9 of the 16 interns (56%) continued to work for government after finishing the Career Starts Program. (1 for 0-3 months, 3 for 3-6 months, 2 on 1 year contract, 2 permanent and 1 other).

Where do We Want to Go/Be in the Future?

Our target is to increase the number of interns who we retain in permanent employment with the Province once their internship is completed.

Outcome 2: Committed to becoming a learning organization and create continuous learning opportunities for its employees.

MEASURE 1: The number of employees and managers attending human resource development training.

See Core Business Area 3, Outcome 1, Measure 2.

MEASURE 2: Money invested in corporate training and development by Government for its employees.

What does this Measure Tell Us?

This measure shows the level of Government investment in corporate employee learning and development opportunities provided by the Human Resource Development unit of the Public Service Commission.

Where are We Now?

Currently, Government invests just over a half a million dollars in employee training and development.

Where do We Want to Go/Be in the Future?

Our target is to maintain or increase the current level of investment in training and development in support of a professional public service.

Outcome 3: Workforce values employee differences.

MEASURE 1: The number of employees and managers who have attended diversity and employment equity education program courses.

What does this Measure tell Us?

Courses are designed to promote diversity in the workplace. The objective is to provide diversity awareness through education to as many employees as possible. These courses will increase managers' understanding of diversity in the workplace.

Where are We Now?

This past year, 234 employees took the Diversity and Employment Equity Education Training course. Approximately 75% of the workforce have taken this course to date.

Where do We Want to Go/Be in the Future?

We would like to see an increase from 75% to 95% in the number of employees taking the Diversity and Employment Equity Education Training course.

Outcome 4: Ensure departments are positioned to respond to emerging human resources needs.

MEASURE 1: The number of days to fill a position.

A formal evaluation process for the staffing function is scheduled for the fiscal year 2003/2004. In the interim, two of the streamline staffing function pilot departments (Health and Finance CSU) have reported a decrease of 14 days in most cases.

What does this Measure Tell Us?

This measure shows the level of efficiency in staffing Government positions including the ability to respond quickly to HR needs.

Where are We Now?

Positions were staffed on an average of 70 - 75 days from the closing date of the job competition. Streamlined Staffing Function pilot departments have

reported a 14 day decrease. This reduction can be attributed to departments not having to wait for applications and approvals from the Public Service Commission.

Where do We Want to Go/Be in the Future?

Our target is an average of 20 days from the closing date of the job competition. This will be achieved with a streamlined staffing system designed to reduce the time to fill a position. This system decentralizes the staffing function to Government line departments. The Public Service Commission will, however, continue to support the staffing function by providing training, posting vacancies and helping ensure fair hiring.

Outcome 5: Provide an environment which supports the well-being of employees and managers.

MEASURE 1: Utilization rate of Employee Assistance Program (EAP) program.

What does this Measure Tell Us?

The measure indicates how many Government employees are using the Government of Nova Scotia's EAP program which offers confidential assistance to Government employees, their partners and dependents who may be experiencing personal problems. An increase in the rate could indicate higher stress levels, however, it may also be seen as a positive outcome as more employees seek assistance rather than miss work due to an unaddressed workplace or personal problem. It is critical to monitor and evaluate utilization rates. Quality service delivery depends on employee health, safety and wellness.

Base Year Data	(2000/2001):	8.32%
	(2002/2003):	9.32%
Target	(2004/2005):	Monitor and Assess

Where are We Now?

In 2002/2003, we had an 9.32% utilization rate, an increase of 1.00% from the previous fiscal year.

Where do We Want to Go/Be in the Future?

Through further promotion of EAP, an increased awareness will likely result in an increased utilization rate. It is important to monitor trends, the reasons for a significant increase or decrease must be flagged and addressed.

MEASURE 2: Time lost due to general illness.

What does this Measure Tell Us?

Absenteeism can be a significant cost to Government. General illness is an indicator of the general health levels of employees.

Where are We Now?

Through attendance management, Government has reduced the level of absenteeism in Government. The 2000/2001 (base year) average for general illness and medical appointments is 4.15 days per employee per year. In 2002/2003 the rate was 4.24, an increase of 0.09.

Where do We Want to Go/Be in the Future?

Our target (2004/2005) is to reduce our current rate of time lost due to general illness to 3.75.

MEASURE 3: Number of workplace accidents and time lost as a result of accidents/injuries.

What does this Measure Tell Us?

This measure provides the number of workplace accidents across government departments in any given year as well as the time lost as a result of these accidents and injuries.

Where are We Now?

In 2000/2001, there were 597 workplace accidents which was reduced by 35 (5.9 %) to 562 in 2002/2003. Despite a reduction in workplace accidents, there has been an increase of 5,494 days (53%) in time lost due to accidents/injuries from 10,360 days lost in 2000/2001 to 15,854 in 2002/2003. This increase is supported by a corresponding increase in the severity rate (length of time an employee is off work) from 96.46 days in 2000/2001 to 163.90 in 2002/2003, indicating that the WCB claims are down in regard to the number of incidents, but the claims are longer in duration, ie. employees are requiring more time off to recover. Possible reasons for this increase in

severity rate could be more serious injuries or the impact of Bill 90 (Workers Compensation Board Bill) which required all previous claims (appeals, etc) to be cleared in a short time frame. Bill 90 also had a retroactive impact that resulted in a significant increase in the severity rate of organizations across Nova Scotia as some long term claims were accepted and recorded. Severity rate is a measure of the effectiveness of disability/claims management systems and programs in an organization; system wide disability management programs have yet to be implemented in government.

Where do We Want to Go/Be in the Future?

Line departments target (2004/2005) a reduction in both the number of workplace accidents and time lost due to workplace accidents and injuries. The Public Service Commission supports departments in meeting their OH&S responsibilities with a corporate OH&S policy, consultation and advice for OHS programming and in disability case management, as well as corporate OH&S compliance auditing.

Core Business Area 4: Audit and Evaluation

The focus of audit and evaluation as a new core business area under legislation, will be the establishment of an annual planning process and development of an audit and evaluation mandate document. Outcomes and relevant performance measures will be identified in the 2003/2004 Business Plan.

Appendix A: Organizational Chart

Public Service Commission
Effective March 31, 2003